

PRIVACY MODE SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR HOME NETWORK TELEPHONE

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5 A system and method are provided for controlling
communications privacy in a Home Network telephone system. The
method comprises: using a gateway to send and receive calls on at least
one external telephone line; supplying privacy and public mode bridging
options; and, selectively excluding bridges between external telephone
10 lines and a plurality of Home Network endpoints. In response to the
privacy mode being selected, the gateway bridges a call between a first
external telephone line and a first endpoint, and prevents bridges between
the first external telephone line and other endpoints in the system.
Alternately, when the public mode is selected, the gateway bridges a call
15 between the first external telephone line and the first endpoint; and
permits bridges between the first external telephone line and other
endpoints in the system. That is, while the call is bridged to the first
endpoint, a bridge is added between the first telephone line and the
second endpoint. The privacy and public mode bridging options are
20 selected with respect to nodes. A node can be an external telephone line
or an endpoint. That is, a privacy or public mode of operation can be
selected for a first external telephone line, whether calls are received or
originated through the Home Network telephone system. Likewise, a
privacy or public mode of operation can be selected for a particular
25 endpoint, regardless of whether the endpoint receives or originates the
call.